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ABSTRACT

Presented by the Region VII Child Welfare Training Center, this collection of four papers examines aspects of interaction between schools and social agencies which could be exploited more fully to the benefit of both organizations. The first paper, a presentation from the Sixth Rural Institute of Social Work in Rural Areas entitled "Synergistic Modeling: Methods of Cooperation among Rural Schools and Agencies," presents general suggestions and gives a case study of the methods employed in Region II. The second paper, "Developing Access for Agencies to Information in University Learning Resource Collections/Libraries," discusses the advantages and disadvantages of developing access to university learning resource collections/libraries and makes specific suggestions for developing methods of expanding access. The third and fourth selections were developed for presentation at the annual retreat of the Kansas Council on Social Work Education. The third, "Ideas About How the Kansas Universities and Colleges Can Support SRS (Social and Rehabilitation Services) in Meeting Its Staff Training Needs," has implications beyond the boundaries of Kansas despite its specific state focus. The fourth selection is a checklist of methods which enable schools and agencies to work cooperatively. (CK)

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REGION VII CHILD WELFARE TRAINING CENTER

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The Grassroots Connections: Strategies for Increasing Synergy Between Schools and Agencies

Prepared by:

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WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST LOUIS

Introduction

"Use it up, wear it out,
make do or do without."

"Necessity is the mother of invention."

Schools and social service agencies are in the newest age of economic scarcity. Schools and agencies are also in an age of increasing societal need. Social workers may accept the traditional bywords that encourage practitioners to make bricks out of straw. Still, they need some practical suggestions about where to begin. The Region VII Child Welfare Training Center is disseminating the following set of papers as one set of strategies. They have each been produced in the last year, 1981. They each examine aspects of the interaction between schools and agencies that could be exploited more fully to the benefit of both organizations.

The first paper is a presentation from the Sixth Rural Institute of Social Work in Rural areas: "Synergistic Modeling: Methods of Cooperation among Rural Schools and Agencies". It not only presents general suggestions but also gives a case study of the methods employed in a county in Region II.

The second, "Developing Access for Agencies to Information in Unerversity Learning Resource Collections/Libraries" looks at a specific example of how increasing use of a capital resource expands rather than contracts the benefits to the owner.

The third and fourth selections were developed for presentation at the annual retreat of the Kansas Coucil on Social Work Education: "Ideas About How the Kansas Universities and Colleges Can Support SRS in Meeting Its Staff Training Needs";

"Methods for Schools and Agencies to Work Cooperatively". The first has a specific state focus but has implications beyond the boundaries of Kansas. The second is a check list of suggestions collected from a number of sources.

The Region VII Child Welfare Training Center presents this collection to stimulate thoughts about creative new and old methods for social workers to meet the needs of the United States in a period of scarcity. We look forward to hearing from the others of you who are developing The Grassroot Connections.

Synergistic Modeling: Methods of Cooperation between Rural Agencies and Rural Schools

Alison T. Tarleau of Region VII Child Welfare Training Center and Phyllis Simmons, Administrator of Suffolk County Community Services Administration and member of the Region II steering committee, presented a discussion, "Synergistic Modeling: Methods of Cooperation among Rural Agencies and Rural Schools". The moderator for the presentation was Annette H. Boette, Deputy Director of the Children's Bureau of South Carolina.

Dr. Tarleau stressed that there is an increasing impetus to use resources to the highest degree of efficiency particularly in light of the new federal budget cuts. Therefore, she was presenting a series of suggestions about methods for a synergistic rural model. A synergism, according to Webster's Seventh New Colliagiate Dictionary is, "cooperative action of discrete agencies such that the total effect is greater than the sum of two effects taken independently". Rural schools and agencies must learn to exploit each other so that together they are increasing their productivity geometrically. The seven areas that Dr. Tarleau saw as potential areas of cooperation are:

1. Cooperation around ancillary services for assisting in training that uses telecommunications. When an agency is using telecommunications, there is a lack of on-site consultation. It may be that for a relatively insignificant fee, the agency can contract with a local college or technical school and a social scientist at the local school to answer the occasional question that may come up when the distant instructor is no longer available

2. Agencies could use the long term training capability of the courses in the local college or technical school programs in education, sociology, and psychology as well as social work programs to assist with the training for foster parents and adoptive parents. Not only could pre-service training come through the school, but also the school could serve as a long term support resource for self-help groups that needed a meeting site.

3. The university telenetworks are being used by agencies for training already. However, the networks are getting so popular in some states, like South Carolina, that scheduling may be a problem. The local college or technical school can be an important addition in this process since they have the equipment in many cases not only for the CTR but also the capability for two way communication talk back systems to assist in the training

4. Schools are beginning to take a new look at their learning resource centers and to focus on problems of access over problems of simple acquisition. By developing new techniques to keep faculties informed about the information in the Center, the Center may develop strategies that would make it easier for agencies to tap this potential resource. One simple suggestion is that a list of new acquisitions by topic area could be disseminated at a nominal fee. Another is to have agencies represented on the Resource Center's acquisition advisory committee.

5. Schools have traditionally turned to agencies as a source of potential students for "short courses" and as a source for field placements. Agencies see schools as a source of local expertise and long-term training. Each of these traditional links need to be given renewed consideration.

Agencies often contract with state universities to do training across the state agency system. It may be that rural schools, albeit that they are smaller and have a faculty of less reknown should compete for some of the contracts in the local areas more aggressively.

6. Professionals in both rural agencies and rural schools complain about the isolation that they experience. One suggestion is that local social scientists and human service workers form mutual support groups that will minimize the professional isolation.

7. An important element of dealing with the new economic policies that are coming from the federal government is long term, macro level assessment of social trends. This is vital both to decision makers in schools and agencies. The planners and the resources of both groups could be used not only to meet the need for information in both groups but also so that effective advocacy and lobbying efforts may be undertaken by both groups.

Phyllis Simmons presented information on the situation in her county and showed the importance of mutual assistance of schools and agencies in Suffolk County New York.

New York has 52 rural and 6 urban counties. However, most people think of the state only in terms of New York City. Suffolk is a county with many of the typical problems of rural counties, lack of public transportation and expense of travel, plus some special problems since it lies in the same state as huge New York City. There is a tendency to "warehouse" people in need of state facilities. These institutions are ususally stuck away in rural settings. Suffolk has 5 major institutions for the mentally ill and 2 major institutions for the mentally retarded. The county is also the site for the greatest concentration of colleges and universities in the state. One of these schools SUNY Stonybrook received a large federal grant for educating students in order to upgrade the level of knowledge and skills available to the state agencies. Since the agency was to be the ultimate beneficary of the monies, the agency personnel said to the school that, "We are putting our money with you so you must take our needs into

account". The agencies had a major effect on the school. First, Phyllis Simmons and others from the agency served as a review panel when new faculty were hired, giving their opinions on the candidates. Second, the agencies worked with the faculty to ensure that the curriculum itself met the needs of agencies. The staff of the agencies are a major pool of students for the schools and the schools then meet training needs for the agencies. There is a special process for handling field work and practica. The students work in the agencies as would regular workers. There are two practica supervisors who are based in the field rather than at the school. When a problem arises about a students cases, that supervisor is there to assist. That supervisor also has faculty status at the school and can therefore be an advocate for the program in faculty meetings.

Suffolk county has a major commitment to the use of training that does not involve moving people to people. This is important in Region II since it includes such remote areas as Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Guam. Several different approaches are used. One is exemplified by the training around the Child Welfare Reform Act. In this case, an overview was given by mass video presentations and then local discussion leaders dealt with specifics in follow up sessions. Telephone conferences are used intensively and so are CRTs. Some controversy has been stirred up over questions about security and confidentiality with the use of these "third wave" technologies. Individual learning is also employed with Self Administered Training. In addition individualized training manuals are being developed along with each of the new video-based courses. Schools are helping with contracts for developing courses and manuals as a source of assistance wwith equipment and software.

Schools are serving another and new function for agencies, referees. As duplication is a chronic problem that can no longer be tolerated, agencies are dividing up tasks by means of agreements in which one will work in one area while another agency will work in another. Schools, as neutral but interested parties, are being used to mediate in this process.

Developing Access for Agencies to Information in University Learning Resource Collection/Libraries

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Abstract

The need to develop access to university learning resource collections/libraries is becoming an issue of more than academic interest as the economic conditions in the country worsen. The advantages as well as the disadvantages are reviewed in this paper. Several specific suggestions are made for developing methods of expanding access. Some of the suggestions are based on outreach into the community and some build on the internal organization of the collection.

The academic setting has traditionally been maintained apart from the mainstream of service delivery.[1] Therefore, when there is a decision to open up the opportunity to use the resources of the university resource collection to child welfare service providers, one is breaking new ground. There are some real advantages to opening a learning resource collection but there are also some formidable obstacles. First, and perhaps foremost among these stumbling blocks is the tradition of the university itself. Universities have long guarded their rights to be treated as a separate entity from the rest of the community. High status and the deference that is given to the upper classes have been granted to the university because it is able to be exclusive (Petrucci, 1967). Indeed, this ability to exclude, to be highly selective, has been a major selling point of the university to its potential audience (Jencks and Riesman, 1969). This exclusivity has been reflected in the university libraries. Access to materials is limited even for members of the university. Free access is a privilege granted only to certain faculty. For instance, at many University carrels are difficult to get, even for faculty engaged in research. A faculty member must apply for space, justify the request and hope for the best. Having free access is thus a status symbol. More then this, it is a sign of power.

Power is the ability to enforce one's will over and above the desires of others (Weber, 1946). Knowledge is a method to create power. In the last few years there has been attention focused, for example, on the ability of the mass media to make and to break political figures. This is a clear demonstration of the effect of control of the flow of information on enforcing one's point of view (cf. MacNeil, 1968). Given that knowledge is, or at least has the potential to be, power, then it is less surprising that access to the sources of knowledge would be limited to an elite. One can even understand that the norm of acting in an almost worshipful manner while in the learning

[1] This paper was prepared through the Region VII Child Welfare Training Center, OHDS Grant No. 90-07-1959. An earlier draft was presented at the Fifth Annual Conference on Training in the Human Services.

resource collection is a show of deference appropriate to the prestige and power of the organization.

By conferring the special privilege of access to information to a certain group, one is, by definition, excluding other groups. The effects can be most dramatic. An indication of the relative powerlessness of Blacks has been not only their limited ability to gain access to collections but also has tended to mean that literature of special interest to them or by Black authors has been less likely to be included in a collection (Baxter and Sansom, 1972; Dawes, 1978).

The effect of this exclusivity can be seen, by extrapolation, to effect other groups, too. In the case of social work practitioners, their limited access to information is an irritant to the already somewhat strained relations between the academic and the world of application. Practitioners tend to get current information only from the journals to which that they can afford to subscribe. The type of materials that are often produced and used by practitioners tend not to be easy or straight forward to catalogue; therefore, much of it is either never collected or is stored by index levels with an "Every Man For Himself" attitude.

It is a period of great fluidity in our society, at the moment, as the United States adapts to a constricted economy and a more conservative social atmosphere. A consequence of these changes is that a new philosophy is being accented: "Use it up; Wear it out; Make do, or do without.

The university has maintained a conscious separation from the main stream. This very exclusivity has helped not only to create the prestige laden research atmosphere but also has created a degree of distrust and envy that is evident in town and country conflicts. It may be particularly difficult for the university to keep separate in new social economic circumstances. The financial contributors the grant officers, the government, the students and parents paying tuition, the alumni will all be placing demands for greater cost accountibility on the school which will tend to tie the school

more closely to the community (cf. Johnson, 1981). At the same time, social service workers are having similar pressure put on them to do more with fewer resources. Social service workers, in an attempt to assess all that can be included in the network of available resources, are trying to draw on the local schools library/resource collection. Unfortunately, university resource collections are feeling the pinch, being asked to prune the less used journals and the more expensive texts, at just the time when the community would like increased access to the collection, i.e. access to a "free lunch." For the school, it may seem like the worst possible timing, but it is can be viewed as an opportunity for the development of a symbiotic relationship that shouldn't be wasted. This is a chance to build strength for both school and agency. The cost is a loss of independence and separation, but we believe that this is a worthwhile price. The payoff is a more diverse, useable and fully exploited collection. The collection will also, in all probability, only have the capability to undertake the outreach, and the liaison work necessary to build the new relationship if the school makes it a stated policy to pursue this new cooperation. It will take an investment of time, energy, personnel, resources and prestige.

Some of the possible methods for developing the links will be explored next, but first it needs to be stated that this list is suggestive, not exhaustive and second, the criterion for selection has been maximum pay off for mimimum cost.

Outreach

1) Alumni/community advisory group. Each collection is developed with certain priorities. The practitioners could advise the staff about a number of issues. First, are those issues that are of particular moment in the field. This assistance would allow the collection to be made more relevant or all users both inside and outside the university itself. Second, they can assist the staff in developing new links to the community.

2) Paid user agreement. An individual or an agency might contract with the collection for a set number of searches plus the option of checking out books that are in the open

stacks. Such an arrangement is already in practice in some law libraries. The fee would help defray some of the costs of operation. Agreement also would serve as an acknowledgement that the university is a community resource and thus lessen the psychological barrier that has kept some legal people from exploiting the academic collection now.

3) Embedded information/vertical files. Some information is kept in a more protected environment than other information. Rare documents archives are very limiting through their regulation. Such papers tend to be deeply "embedded" in a series of filters that screen out users. Carefully catalogued, and kept in closed stacks, the archives have considerable protection. The information that agencies are likely to want does not need such a high degree of protection and, indeed, it would not be cost effective even to catalogue this information completely. Storage in vertical files, without formal binding, would not only be less expensive but also would be more accessible than if the material were stored by catagory. The information would be "on line" faster, too.

Internal Organization

1) Pathfinders/thesaurus. The collection is organized to store information, not to assist the researcher or the person who is trying to keep up-to-date on a subject. Subject catalogues are notoriously poor; A-V material is usually put in a catalogue separate from monographs from journals. Indexes are not necessarily stored near the catalogues. Given that agency personnel have limited time to use the collection, aids are necessary to assist in the use of the collection. Bibliographies of new acquistions, xerox copies of the tables of contents of new journals could be made available quarterly. Also "pathfinder" and thesaurus aids for use of catalogues and indexes would help with searches of monographs. The assistance would benefit not just the agencies but also the university community itself.

2) Inter-library regional networks. Inter-library loan has been the first step in a process that allows the expansion of resources. However, it tends to be slow or, at best, not very

flexible. Regional library networks could be excellent supplements. Turn around times would be faster (cf. Skipsna, 1979). Morever, non-print material would be exchanged.

The above are all suggestions that could be part of a conscious policy to blur the division between the academic's and the practitioner's worlds. The other question remains. Will the university and the sound service agency choose to join? Will they be willing to treat information as if it is not the center piece in a zero sum game?

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IDEAS ABOUT HOW THE KANSAS UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES CAN SUPPORT SRS IN MEETING ITS STAFF TRAINING NEEDS

1. With the reduction of available resources (money, tangible services, staff time, and staff support), some clients are experiencing feelings of helplessness loss of control and loss of capability to control their environment. They feel threats to their sense of security and self-esteem. Some express this thru anger. A few are verbally abusive, some project their anger, some express their anger through sarcasm, ridicule and/or silence.

We need training in how to deal with the angry client, the meaning of anger, the use of anger, how we feel when others are angry with us, productive vs. non-productive ways of dealing with it, and obstacles to effectively deal with anger. This includes ways of using the anger as a tool in the "helping process."

2. With the loss of federal and state funds, the reduction of staff, uncertainty about the future, and assumption of additional responsibility, staff need some training on how to "care" for themselves and each other: human relations training; how to see strengths; to help others; how to continue being aware, sensitive and tolerant of ourselves and others; to be optimistic about one's ability to deal with the changing world; how to be human while being professional.

3. Especially for some staff without social work backgrounds, there is a need for training in interviewing. This includes the purpose and components of a good interview, skills in communicating, conceptual framework, and ability to use "self." Of course, refresher courses and advanced interviewing training are always needed for staff who have been out of school or away from "practice" for awhile.

4. Many staff need training in child welfare. This includes the field of child welfare, the changing family, growth and development of the child, child-parent relationships, how various agencies contribute to child welfare, health guardianship issues, delinquency, placement decisions, the exceptional child, and other issues related to custody and care of children in a rural state.

5. With our own resources drying up, SRS social workers will be looking to the community more than ever before for assistance in meeting client needs. Training is needed in creating new service systems, making the best use of current systems, searching out and identifying resources, modifying existing services to meet changing needs, facilitating referrals.

This probably includes developing support systems with colleagues in other agencies—communicating with them, sharing data, organizing, monitoring and evaluating services.

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6. There is a need for skills in working with our social institutions and social systems, both formal and informal. This is particularly true of the schools, families, juvenile justice system, and courts. People in each system need to know more and be able to work more closely with the other. A multi-disciplinary approach may be called for. Attorneys, judges, school staff, police officers, and other professionals who work with our clients (children and adults alike) need to learn more about each other. Our staff particularly needs to have opportunities to understand and become comfortable with working with non-social work staff in other systems. There is particularly a need for understanding the court system and how to provide testimony.

7. Many of our staff want to learn more about special education and the ways of meeting the special needs of children. This includes working with the multiply handicapped, the learning disabled, the child with hearing and visual handicaps, and the child with personal/social adjustment problems. We need skills in working with schools, courts and other professionals to streamline children.

8. We need training on different cultures comprising our client groups - particularly southeast Asian cultures of the Laotians, Vietnamese, and Cambodians. Such training could include life style, language, history, values, social institutions, adjustments to new environments, perceptions of Kansans, expectations and experiences around "planned assistance."

9. We need training in how to work in and through groups--this includes group development and functioning. It embraces how we work within our agency as members of teams, task forces, and ad hoc committees, as well as how we perceive and work with client groups, including families. This would cover types of groups and uses of group structure and process. It could also include knowledge of the uses of special interest groups, strategies, and techniques for working effectively with them.

10. We would like training in job and life management skills: for example, ways to organize our work days and jobs or control of time; skills in understanding the attitudes, feelings, and behaviors of others; problem-solving as a professional and management practice; effective decision making; negotiating differences; communicating effectively; planning and policy participation and presenting plans (selling and persuading).

11. Social workers always value training on current developments and new therapy in the field. Several mentioned that a time lag exists between what's "going on around the country" and hearing about it in Kansas. Any help from our Kansas educational community would be appreciated in closing this leg. As an example, the Reagan Administration has already rendered obsolete some of college/university text-

books and curriculum. Staff would like to learn some of the most recent thinking about how and what colleges/universities are doing to meet the challenges imposed on us by the new administration.

12. One comment directed toward our needs for future staff, for the undergraduate or graduate student who has not yet come to work for SRS, or for the future graduate who will have a job in another private or public agency which will work cooperatively with SRS in the future.

We have a need for people who understand large social systems, particularly people with a knowledge of the structure of social welfare programs, people who understand the place of the social welfare system in a modern, industrialized society, who can understand and use oneself in effectively working thru such a system to help others. This includes how large systems work, the structure and process of large systems, determinants of behavior, leadership, effecting change, and being a creative, effective tool in helping large systems meet the needs of the large diversity of clients who come to it for help.

We need B.S.W.'s particularly with comprehensive generic training and ability to work in a social welfare agency. Several of the competencies in the Baer, Fredrico book Educating the Baccalaureate Social Worker seem particularly important in this regard.*

(1) Identify and assess situations where the relationship between people and social institutions needs to be initiated, enhanced, restored, protected, or terminated.

(2) Develop and implement plans for improving the well-being of people based on problem assessment and exploration of obtainable goals and available options.

(3) Evaluate the extent to which objective and the intervention plan were achieved.

(4) Enhance the problem-solving, coping, and developmental capabilities of people.

(5) Link people with systems that provide them with resources, services and opportunities.

(6) Promote the effective and humane operations of the systems that provide people with services, resources and opportunities.

IDEAS ABOUT WAYS KANSAS COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES CAN PROVIDE TRAINING TO SRS

1. Training sessions - available near the offices of staff - one day and less in length. We no longer have funds available for travel or overnight accommodations so they must be close to home base. Since there is no money for registration, they must be inexpensive. We would suggest no more than $10.00 per person. Whether or not staff can attend during a work day is an administrative decision, generally made by the local administrator. The training must directly relate to the participant's job if there is to be any consideration for work release.

2. We have a need for videotapes, films, slide presentations and other types of media based training. Each of our seventeen area offices and central office are now equipped with 1/8" Betamax videocassette players and monitors. If you could produce materials for us, we could help distribute and direct its use in the area offices.

This could include videotaping particular classroom lectures that have relevance to SRS training needs, or developing new materials to meet our needs. We understand the Bar Association videotapes certain "cases" or seminars, then makes them available to law firms for review. We wonder if the Kansas colleges and universities with social work departments, or KCSWE, could not perform a similar function for social workers in Kansas.

3. We would like you to consider an interdisciplinary approach to training. In Kansas, for example, both K.U. and Washburn have schools of social work and schools of law. Presentations which the schools would co-sponsor might include such areas as dealing with custody battles, juvenile ward, divorces, testifying in court, etc. K-State has a program in child development. It may be that the school of social work and school of child development could co-sponsor training on meeting the needs of children. Of course, we could generate many more ideas, but I think you are getting the idea of a possible approach. How about, as another example, the schools of social work & local hospitals, sponsoring training on meeting the medical needs of our various client groups, such as the very young, or elderly.

4. Other possible approaches to providing training for SRS staff include Talenet, correspondence, and self-contained learning packages. Since each area office now has a talenet outlet, we could explore the idea of a university/college sponsored course during the workday for interested staff. In following up on good practices of adult education, how about developing learning materials that could be sent to interested staff for their use—as they are interested and ready to master the materi

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I don't know how much we have done in Kansas around correspondence learning and/or self-contained learning packages; it might be well worth looking into.

5. There always seems to be a need for professional consultation around particular program and management needs. There are needs for research. I do not have any specifics at this point. I would suggest if there is an interest in providing consultation or doing research that the faculty member contact the appropriate administrator in SRS on a local or state level to work out the specifics.

6. If training is offered during a work day, please remember SRS cannot release all its interested staff toparticipate. The job has to be covered. One of our greatest complaints about training from outside the agency is that it is offered only once, and the people who cannot attend do not get a second shot at it. So, for your consideration, you may want to offer more sessions for fewer persons than just one session for a large group.

7. We have approximately 650 social workers in SRS who need regular licensing. The staff appreciates your interest in helping fill this need. We are prepared to answer any questions and to make time available to you to discuss ways of responding to the training and licensing needs of SRS staff.

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jo mink, Director
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Methods for Schools and Agencies to Work Cooperatively

- Agencies and schools need to form a strong professional network that can serve on the grassroots as well as the national level. By doing this, the "locals" can serve both as one anothers' sounding board and as support systems.

- Schools can serve as a resource that the agencies can exploit to a much larger degree than in the past (see paper on the use of libraries). A model might be the university agricultural extension services.

- Brown bag luncheons can be the foundation for an inexpensive form of staff development.

- Long term training and supplementary training can be given through regularly scheduled courses in social work and allied fields.

- Each school that reviews faculty for tenure includes to some degree a consideration of community service. Agencies could approach the administration of local schools based on their need as part of the community.

- Agencies can and should note those grants that are given to schools and prepare students for work in the public sector. In this case the school is really the steward of the funds that are to benefit the agencies. The agencies should consider forming a committee of agency personnel who could serve as a curricula advisory group for the school.

- TV network and AV sharing could minimize expenses for both schools and agencies. The disadvantage is that this can be difficult bureaucratically.

- Politically, it should be noted that many of the most powerful of the state legislators are from rural areas. Though it is controversial, the local chapter of a professional social work or social service group could work on advocacy issues.

- Schools and Agencies could work together on both community development and community education programs that could be of benefit to the whole community.

- Both schools and agencies could work cooperatively to evaluate the possibilities for bringing new business into an area (see papers by Deaton and Tournier). This might involve working in cooperation with the local community.

- Schools and Agencies could develop an interlocking and on-going system for mutual evaluation and long-term review.

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